

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LIMA 02717 301812 Z

43

ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SS-15 INR-10 NSC-10 CIAE-00 RSR-01

RSC-01 /055 W

----- 069004

R 301750 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5273

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 2717

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PE

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT VELASCO' S HEALTH

1. THROUGH VARIOUS CHANNELS THIS EMBASSY HAS REPORTED FROM TIME TO TIME ON THE STATUS OF PRESIDENT VELASCO' S HEALTH. ALL OF THESE REPORTS HAVE BEEN BASED ON SECOND OR THIRD HAND SOURCES AND APPARENTLY THOSE WHICH HAVE INDICATED INCAPACITY OF ONE KIND OR ANOTHER HAVE BEEN ERRONEOUS.

2. A CLOSE FRIEND OF MINE WHO IS ALSO A REASONABLY CLOSE FRIEND OF VELASCO' S SPENT FOUR HOURS WITH THE PRESIDENT SATURDAY WITH WIVES PRESENT. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME THAT THEY HAVE SEEN EACH OTHER SINCE THE PRESIDENT' S OPERATION. MY FRIEND TELLS ME THAT AT NO TIME DID THE PRESIDENT GIVE ANY INDICATION THAT HE SUFFERED FROM ANY LACK OF VITALITY, LUCIDITY, OR FAILURE OF MEMORY. ON THE CONTRARY, HE SEEMED VERY MUCH HIS OLD SELF, VIVACIOUS, AND REASONABLY AGILE WITH HIS NEW LEG. HE WALKED FAIRLY WELL WITH IT AND WAS IN AND OUT OF HIS WHEEL CHAIR AND OTHER CHAIRS IN HIS DRAWING ROOM WITH APPARENTLY NO DIFFICULTY. HE ALSO GAVE AN EXHIBITION OF THE EXERCISES WHICH HE IS REQUIRED TO CARRY OUT SEVERAL TIMES A DAY.

3. HAVING SAID ALL THIS, MY FRIEND AGREED THAT VELASO COULD NEVER RETURN TO HIS PREVIOUS SCHEDULE AND THAT THE SUCCESSION PROBLEM WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE SOLVED ONE WAY OR ANOTHER EITHER BY JULY 28 OR OCTOBER 3.

BELCHER

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NMAFVVZCZ

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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